Eating for a Healthy Heart

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a U.S. government agency that makes sure foods are safe, wholesome and honestly labeled.

Eat Healthy to Help Prevent Heart Disease

What kills Americans most?

Heart disease. It's the No. 1 cause of death in this country.

You can lower your chances of getting heart disease. One way is to choose foods carefully. For a healthy heart, eat:

less	**fat**
less	**sodium**
fewer	**calories**
more	**fiber.**

Eat less

fat

Some fats are more likely to cause heart disease. These fats are usually found in foods from animals, such as meat, milk, cheese, and butter. They also are found in foods with palm and coconut oils.

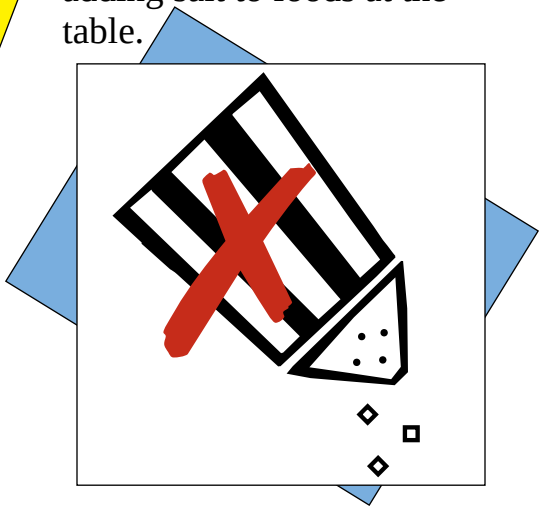
Eat less of these foods.

Eat less

sodium

Eating less sodium can help lower some people's blood pressure. This can help reduce the risk of heart disease.

Sodium is something we need in our diets, but most of us eat too much of it. Much of the sodium we eat comes from salt we add to our food at the table or that food companies add to their foods. So, avoid adding salt to foods at the table.



Eat fewer

calories

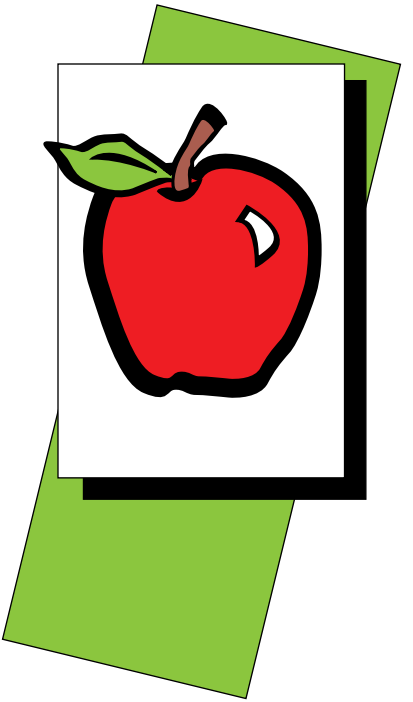
When we eat more calories than we need, we gain weight. Being overweight can cause heart disease.

When we **eat fewer calories** than we need, we lose weight.

Eat more

fiber

Eating fiber from fruits, vegetables and grains may help lower your chances of getting heart disease.



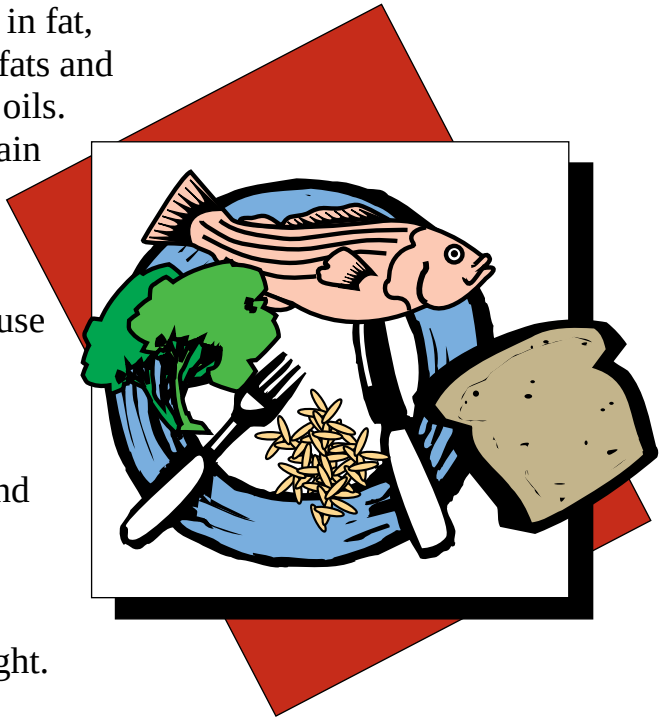
Diet Tips for a Healthy Heart

- Eat a diet low in fat, especially animal fats and palm and coconut oils. (These foods contain saturated fat and cholesterol. Saturated fat and cholesterol can cause heart disease.)

- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.

- Maintain or improve your weight.

- Eat plenty of grain products, fruits and vegetables.



Eat a variety of foods.

Eating this way does not mean you have to spend more money on food. You can still eat many foods that cost the same or less than what you're eating now.

here's how:

Instead of . . .	Do this . . .
whole or 2 percent milk, and cream	➤ Use 1 percent or skim milk.
fried foods	➤ Eat baked, steamed, boiled, broiled, or microwaved foods.
cooking with lard, butter, palm and coconut oils, and shortenings made with these oils	➤ Cook with these oils only: corn safflower sunflower soybean cottonseed olive

Instead of . . .	Do this . . .
smoked, cured, salted and canned meat, poultry and fish	➤ Eat unsalted fresh or frozen meat, poultry and fish.
fatty cuts of meat, such as prime rib	➤ Eat lean cuts of meat or cut off the fatty parts of meat.
one whole egg in recipes	➤ Use two egg whites.
sour cream and mayonnaise	➤ Use plain low-fat yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese, or low-fat or “light” sour cream and mayonnaise.
sauces, butter and salt	➤ Season vegetables, including potatoes, with herbs and spices.
regular hard and processed cheeses	➤ Eat low-fat, low-sodium cheeses.
crackers with salted tops	➤ Eat unsalted or low-sodium whole-wheat crackers.
regular canned soups, broths and bouillons and dry soup mixes	➤ Eat sodium-reduced canned broths, bouillons and soups, especially those with vegetables.

Instead of . . .	Do this . . .
white bread, white rice, and cereals made with white flour	➤ Eat whole-wheat bread, long-grain rice, and whole-grain cereals.
salted potato chips and other snacks	➤ Choose low-fat, unsalted tortilla and potato chips and unsalted pretzels and popcorn.

Tips for Losing Weight

- Eat smaller portions.
- Avoid second helpings.
- Eat less fat by staying away from fried foods, rich desserts, and chocolate candy. Foods with a lot of fat have a lot of calories.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.

Eat "low-calorie" foods, such as low-calorie salad dressings.

Read the

food label

The food label can help you eat less fat and sodium, fewer calories and more fiber.

Look for certain words on food labels.

The words can help you spot foods that may help reduce your chances of getting heart disease. FDA has set rules on how these words can be used. So, if the label says "low-fat," the food must be low in fat.

- Fat-free
- Saturated fat-free
- Low-fat
- Low saturated fat
- Reduced or less fat
- Reduced or less saturated fat
- Cholesterol-free
- Low-cholesterol
- Reduced or less cholesterol
- Lean
- Extra lean
- Healthy

- Sodium-free
- Low-sodium
- Light in sodium
- Lightly salted
- Reduced or less sodium
- Salt-free
- Unsalted

Light
Calorie-free
Low-calorie
Reduced or fewer calories

High-fiber
More or added fiber

Read the Food Label

Look at the side or back of the package.

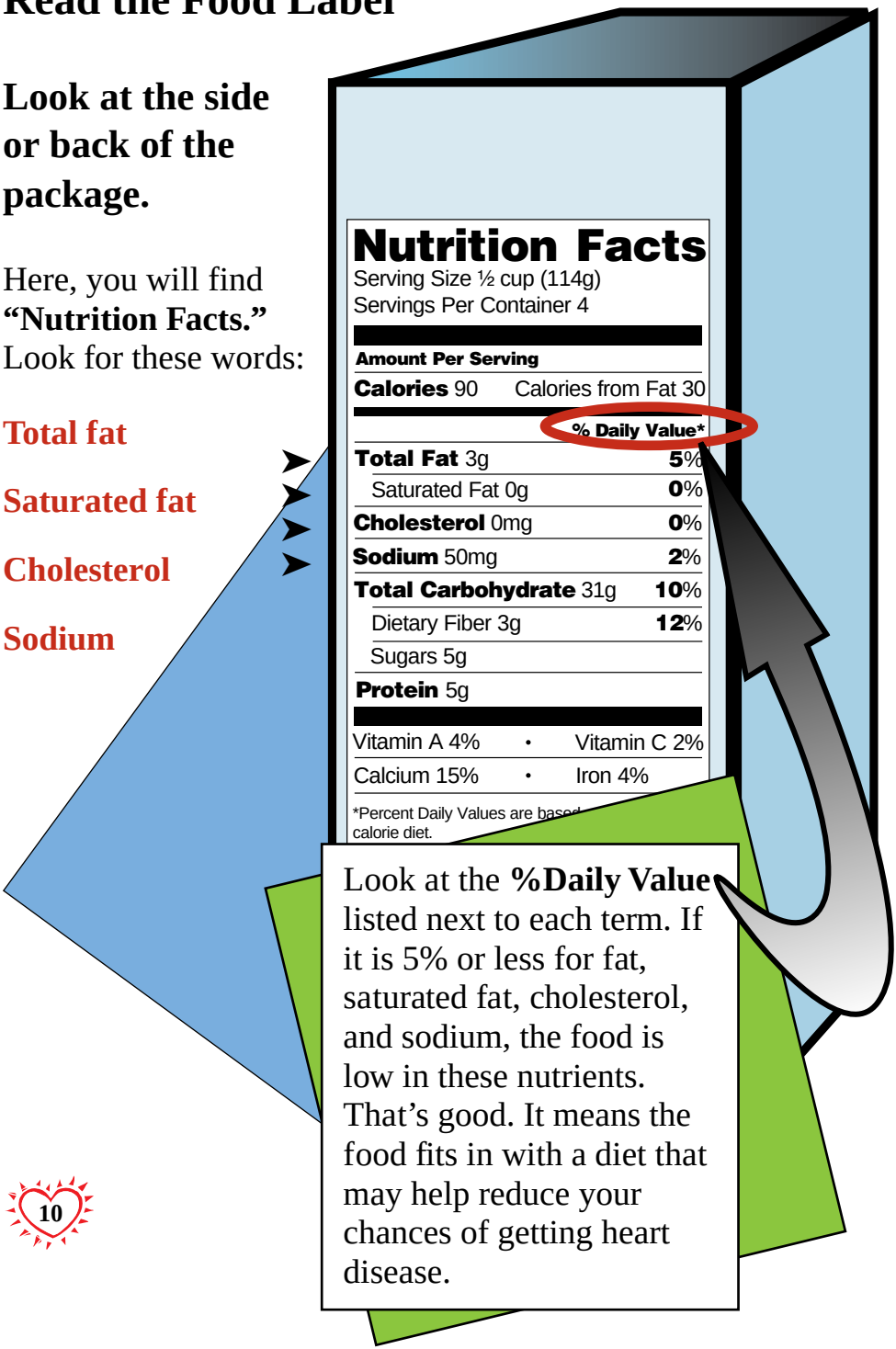
Here, you will find **"Nutrition Facts."** Look for these words:

Total fat

Saturated fat

Cholesterol

Sodium



Look at the **%Daily Value** listed next to each term. If it is 5% or less for fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium, the food is low in these nutrients. That's good. It means the food fits in with a diet that may help reduce your chances of getting heart disease.

Eating for a Healthy Heart

You can lower your chances of getting heart disease. One way is through your diet.

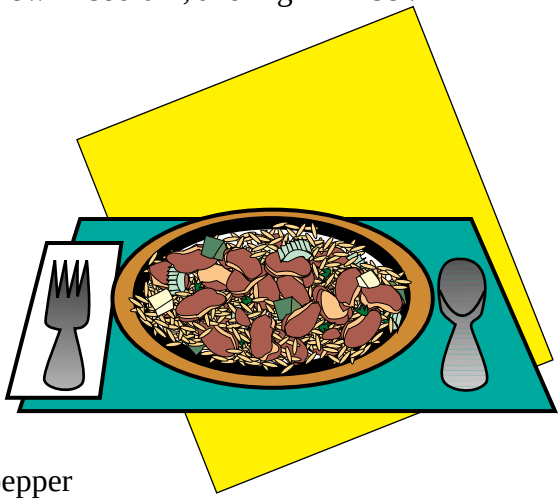
Remember:

- Eat less fat.
- Eat less sodium.
- Reduce your calories if you're overweight.
- Eat more fiber.

Recipe

Here's a recipe that fits right in with the heart healthy way of eating. A serving is low in fat, low in sodium, and high in fiber.

Red Beans and Rice



1 lb dry red beans
2 quarts water
1-1/2 cups chopped onion
1 cup chopped celery
4 bay leaves
3 tbsp chopped garlic
3 tbsp chopped parsley
2 tsp dried thyme, crushed
1 tsp salt
1 tsp black pepper
1 cup chopped sweet green pepper

Pick through beans to remove bad beans. Rinse beans thoroughly. In a 5-quart pot, mix beans, water, onion, celery, and bay leaves. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and cook over low heat for about 1-1/2 hours or until beans are tender. Stir and mash beans against side of pan.

Add garlic, parsley, thyme, salt, black pepper, and green pepper. Cook uncovered, over low heat, until creamy, about 30 minutes. Remove bay leaves. Serve over hot cooked rice.

Makes 8 servings. Each serving provides:
170 calories and these %Daily Values for these nutrients:
total fat 1%
saturated fat 1%
cholesterol 0%
sodium 12%
dietary fiber 29%

Source: *Down Home Healthy: Family Recipes of Black American Chefs Leah Chase and Johnny Rivers*, National Institutes of Health

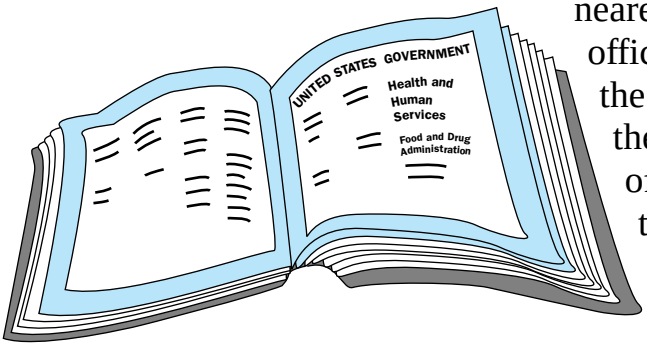
For More Information

FDA has a booklet to help you learn more about the food label. To get a copy, write to:

FDA
HFE-88
Rockville, MD 20857

Ask for: How the New Food Label Can Help You Plan a Healthy Diet, (FDA) 94-2273.

Also, if you have questions, you can call your nearest FDA office. Look for the number in the blue pages of the telephone book.



For help with your diet, see your doctor, or a registered dietitian or nutritionist.

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May 1996
Publication No. (FDA) 96-2302